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MYSTIC™
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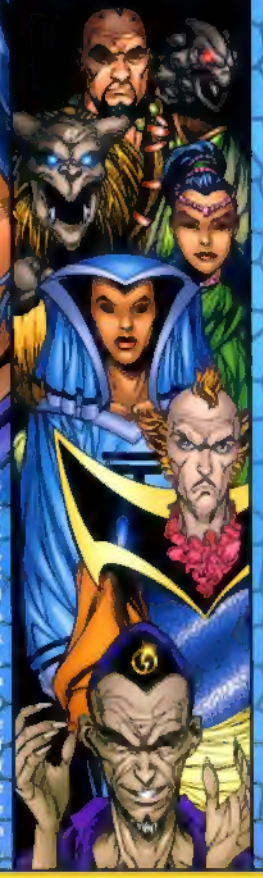
Ron Marz · Brandon Peterson · John Dell · Andrew Crossley

THUS FAR IN MYSTIC

Giselle awakens to find herself in the secret sanctum of the Guild Masters, traditional rulers of the planet Ciress.



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The Masters act as living vessels for the eternal spirits of their respective schools of magic. However, all seven eternal spirits are trapped within Giselle thanks to the mysterious sigil she now bears.

Giselle is confronted by not only the Guild Masters, but also by her sister, Genevieve, who is still hopeful of ascending to Master of the Nouveau Guild. The sisters' reunion is less than cordial, as Giselle and Genevieve almost come to blows but stop short of a magical battle. The Guild Masters, led by the Magus of the Dark Magi Guild, are intent upon regaining their spirits. Luckily, Giselle has no interest in keeping them.

But when a mystic ritual proves unsuccessful in freeing the spirits, the Guild Masters attack Giselle with lethal intent. Seeing her sister's life endangered, Genevieve is spurred to defend Giselle, and manages to free her from the Masters' grip.

Genevieve's actions are rewarded with a savage assault from the Magus, rendering her unconscious. But Genevieve's intervention gives Giselle the opportunity she needs to embrace the power within her as she heeds the disembodied spirit voices. Giselle battles the Masters to a standstill before being convinced by her talking scull to retreat…leaving Genevieve behind. Spent, Giselle escapes to an alley only to be met by a handsome stranger…

YOU AIDED HER!
WE'RE STILL TRAPPED BECAUSE OF YOU!
IT WAS THE ONLY THING TO BE DONE!

I DON'T NECESSARILY DISAGREE, MAGUS...

HR

BUT HAVING YOU TWO FOOLS AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS HELPS OUR SITUATION HOW?

JINAI'S RIGHT. THIS IS POINTLESS.

YOU ALL WANT TO BE RETURNED TO YOUR PROPER GUILDS, TO YOUR ACCUSTOMED VESSELS.

BUT AT PRESENT THERE'S NO WAY OF BRINGING THAT ABOUT.

THIS WOMAN IS LIKE NO OTHER WE'VE ENCOUNTERED. WE HAVE LITTLE OR NO POWER OVER HER.

THE WISE COURSE NOW IS TO LEARN MORE OF OUR CIRCUMSTANCE. WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND HOW WE WERE IMPRISONED, BEFORE WE CAN KNOW HOW WE'LL BE FREED.

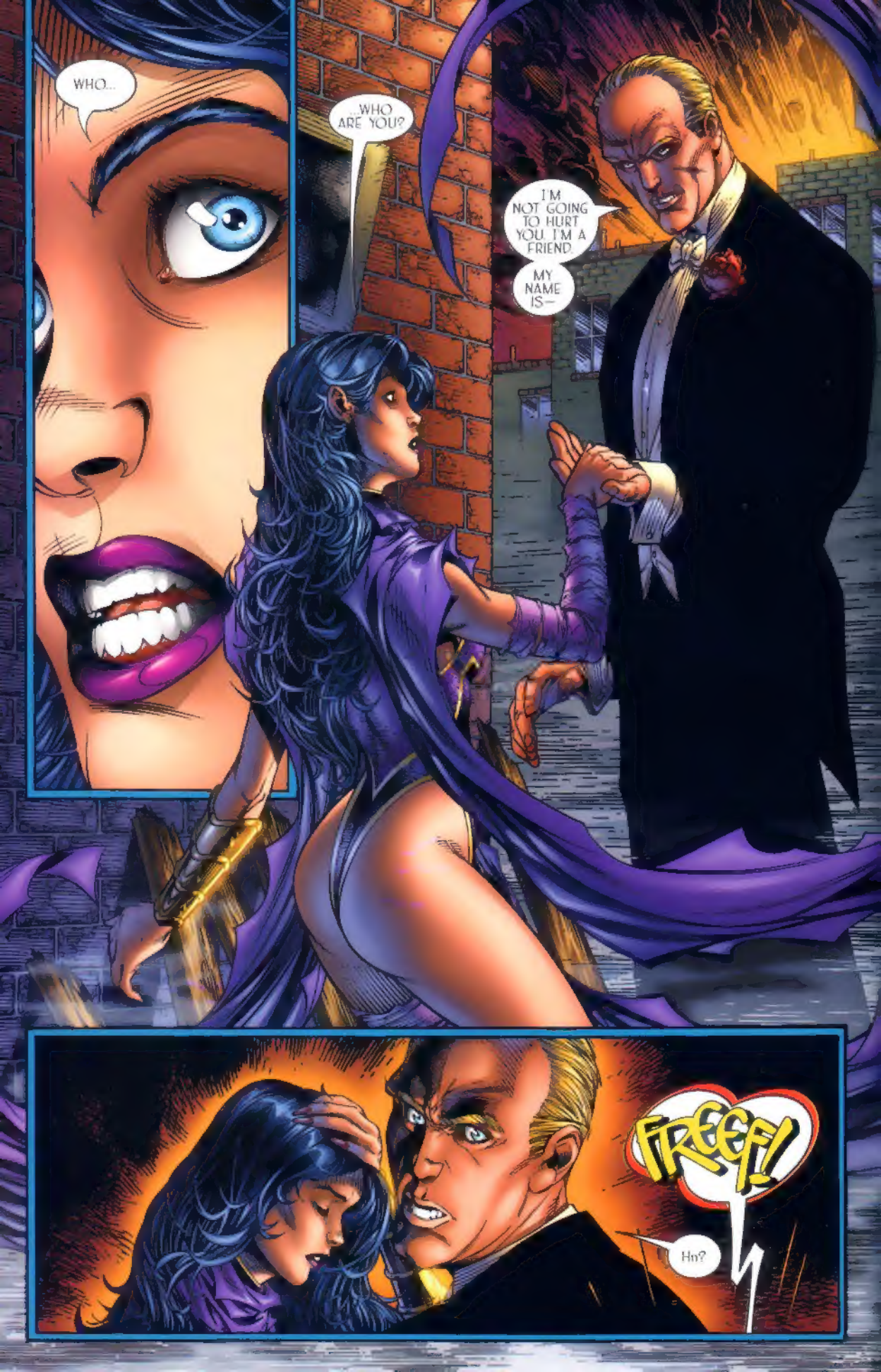
BUT I'M A BIT MORE DISCERNING.

ONE HOST MAY SERVE AS WELL AS ANOTHER FOR YOU, ALAIN...

CENTURIES OF EXISTENCE MUST'VE TAUGHT YOU ALL SOME BIT OF PATIENCE.

SO STILL YOUR TONGUES...

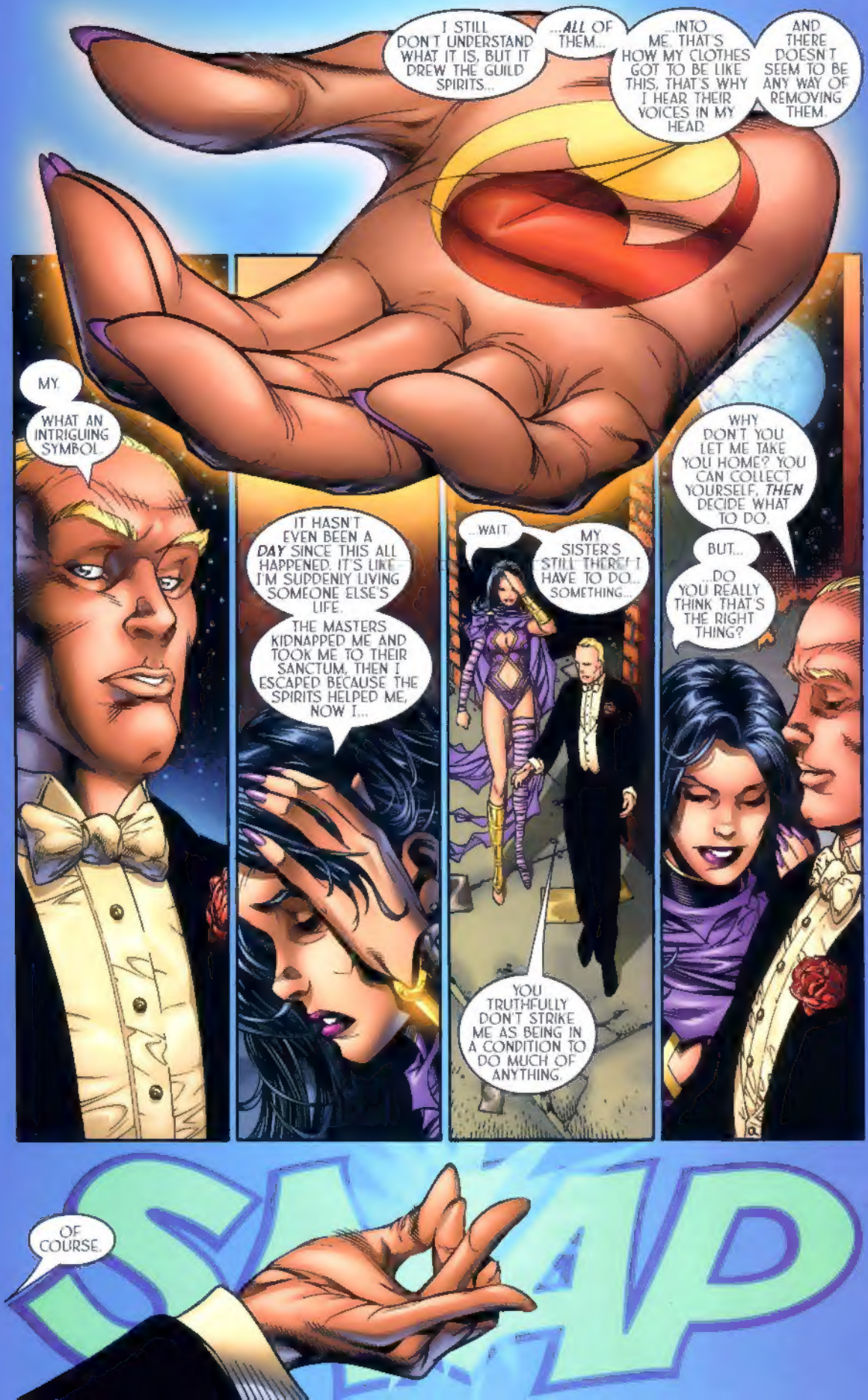
AND BIDE YOUR TIME.


WHO...
...WHO ARE YOU?
I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU. I'M A FRIEND.
MY NAME IS—
FREEF!
Hn?

FERF!
HST HST!
GO ON, MOVE ALONG, YOU MANGY LITTLE—
DON'T HURT HIM!
HE'S MINE, PLEASE...
...PLEASE, DON'T HURT HIM...
OF COURSE I WON'T HURT HIM.
THERE NOW. WHATEVER'S HAPPENED TO YOU, IT'S OVER. YOU'RE SAFE...
eep

...AND A FACE THIS PRETTY SHOULDN'T BE STAINED WITH TEARS.
MY NAME IS DARROW. I'M HONORED TO MAKE YOUR ACQUAINTANCE.
I'M GISELLE. GISELLE VILLARD.
PLEASED TO MEET YOU TOO.
Um... DARROW? IS THAT A FIRST NAME, OR A LAST NAME, OR...WHAT EXACTLY?
JUST DARROW. THAT'S ALL.
VILLARD IS A NAME I'VE HEARD BEFORE.
THE SAME VILLARD WHO WAS TO BE NOUVEAU GUILD MASTER UNTIL YESTERDAY'S RITE WAS DISRUPTED?
DOES THAT HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH HOW YOU ENDED UP HERE?

THAT'S MY SISTER, GENEVIEVE. SHE WAS *SUPPOSED* TO BE GUILD MASTER, BUT...
oh, I'VE MADE SUCH A MESS OF THINGS.
IT CAN'T BE ALL *THAT* BAD, IF YOU TELL ME WHAT'S WRONG...
...MAYBE I CAN HELP.
THERE MUST BE QUITE A TALE TO HOW YOU CAME TO APPEAR IN AN ALLEY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT WEARING SUCH AN...
...*INTERESTING*...
...FASHION CHOICE. YOU *CAN* TRUST ME, GISELLE.
OKAY.
OKAY, I REALLY DO NEED TO TALK TO SOMEBODY ABOUT... EVERYTHING.
BUT YOU SHOULD UNDERSTAND SOMETHING ABOUT ME FIRST.
EVEN THOUGH MY FAMILY'S ALWAYS BEEN ALLIED WITH THE NOUVEAU GUILD, I *NEVER* CARED ABOUT MAGIC.
MY SISTER'S THE ONE WHO WANTED THAT. SHE APPLIED HERSELF WHILE I DID... *OTHER* THINGS.
GEN WORKED PRETTY MUCH HER ENTIRE LIFE TO GET A CHANCE AT BECOMING GUILD MASTER. AND WHEN SHE FINALLY DID, *I* SCREWED UP HER RITE OF ASCENSION.
BECAUSE OF THIS.


I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT IT IS, BUT IT DREW THE GUILD SPIRITS...
...ALL OF THEM...
...INTO ME. THAT'S HOW MY CLOTHES GOT TO BE LIKE THIS, THAT'S WHY I HEAR THEIR VOICES IN MY HEAD.
AND THERE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE ANY WAY OF REMOVING THEM.
MY.
WHAT AN INTRIGUING SYMBOL.
IT HASN'T EVEN BEEN A DAY SINCE THIS ALL HAPPENED. IT'S LIKE I'M SUDDENLY LIVING SOMEONE ELSE'S LIFE.
THE MASTERS KIDNAPPED ME AND TOOK ME TO THEIR SANCTUM, THEN I ESCAPED BECAUSE THE SPIRITS HELPED ME. NOW I...
...WAIT.
MY SISTER'S STILL THERE! I HAVE TO DO... SOMETHING...
YOU TRUTHFULLY DON'T STRIKE ME AS BEING IN A CONDITION TO DO MUCH OF ANYTHING.
WHY DON'T YOU LET ME TAKE YOU HOME? YOU CAN COLLECT YOURSELF, THEN DECIDE WHAT TO DO.
BUT...
...DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT'S THE RIGHT THING?
SNAP
OF COURSE.

NICE CAR.
JUST SOMETHING THAT GETS ME WHERE I NEED TO GO.
WE'RE TAKING THE YOUNG LADY HOME, MOMO. SHE'LL TELL YOU THE ADDRESS.
SURE T'ING, BOSS.
ALLOW ME.
THANK YOU. FOR BEING SO KIND.
I ASSURE YOU...
...THE PLEASURE'S MINE.
FNEEP!
DON'T WORRY, CHUBBY. I WON'T FORGET YOU.
PLBT
Hmf.

WAKE UP MY DEAR
MMMM WHERE'S MY
MY SISTER? WHERE'S GISELE?
SHE ESCAPED BECAUSE OF YOUR INTERVENTION
SHE ESCAPED WITH OUR ETERNAL SPIRITS STILL HELD HOSTAGE WITHIN HER
BUT WE HAVE YOU, GENEVIEVE DON'T WE?
SAVE THAT TONE FOR SOMEBODY WHO'S GOING TO BE INTIMIDATED BY IT

I'M THE *OLDER* SISTER REMEMBER?
SUCH AN IMPRESSIVE DISPLAY
BUT READY YOUR NOUVEAU ABILITIES ARE *NOTHING* COMPARED TO THE COMBINED MIGHT OF SIX GUILDS
I BELIEVE YOU'LL FIND YOU'RE QUITE TRAPPED
YOU'VE CAUSED COMPLICATIONS FOR US WE'VE SEEN TO IT YOU WON'T BE CAUSING MORE

YOU COULD HAVE BEEN ONE OF US YOU KNOW YOU COULD HAVE SHARED IN THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BEING A GOLD MASTER SHARED IN THE POWER
BUT YOU CHOSE TO BETRAY US
THE POWER YOUR SISTER WIELDS IS NOT HERS
IT WON'T BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE
AT ANY COST
WE ATTEMPTED TO BE
PLEASANT
IN THIS MATTER
NO LONGER
END

KRAK!

PLIP
Plorp
schlep
GENEVIEVE
I'M SURE YOUR SISTER AND I WILL GET ALONG JUST FINE
NO
NO DON'T DO THIS
YOU BETRAYED US, GENEVIEVE
YOU'RE ABOUT TO DO THE SAME TO YOUR SISTER

YEAH, OKAY
SO THE WHOLE TALKING TO HERSELF THING WAS PRETTY STRANGE AND I HAVE NO IDEA *WHAT* SHE WAS WEARING BUT THERE *WAS* SOMETHING ABOUT HER ALPHONSE
ME STOPPING BY LIKE THIS, YOU THINK SHE'LL BE
GROWF
RRRUMMBLDYPUTPUT
SURPRISED?
NOW WHAT THE HELL'S *THIS* FIRST THING IN THE MORNING?
SINSR

I GUESS YOU HAD A PRETTY LATE NIGHT
uh..
THIERRY?
FOUND YOUR ADDRESS IN THE PARCHMENT PAGES AND I THOUGHT I'D SEE IF YOU WERE OKAY AND IF YOU MAYBE WANTED TO GO FOR ESPRESSO
BUT SEEMS LIKE YOU'RE BUSY
Oh
WELL
IT'S SWEET OF YOU TO CHECK ON ME REALLY
BUT IT *HAS* BEEN A LONG NIGHT AND I JUST WANT TO GO UPSTAIRS AND COLLAPSE I HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION?
YEAH THE SITUATION'S PRETTY OBVIOUS SORRY
DIDN'T MEAN TO BE A NUISANCE
SPUTTER
BOOM

FRIEND OF YOURS?
NOT REALLY. I ONLY MET HIM YESTERDAY. HE'S AN ARTIST.
AN
A BOHEMIAN
SO YOUR DOORMAN ISN'T ON DUTY YET?
NO. CLAUDE'S NOT A FAMOUSLY EARLY RISER, ESPECIALLY WHEN HE'S HAD A DATE WITH A TALL CHARDONNAY. IT'S OKAY. I'LL JUST TAKE THE STAIRS.
NONSENSE. I'VE SEEN YOU THIS FAR. I'D BE TERRIBLY REMISS IF I DIDN'T FINISH THE JOB.
MAY I?
IT'S NOT NECESSARY, BUT IF YOU DON'T MIND...
SURE.
HAPPY TO BE OF SERVICE.
FLOOR?

OH NO... LOOK AT THIS PLACE
I COMPLETELY FORGOT I WOULD BE SUCH A SHAMBLES
THERE WAS THIS BIG RED GUY WITH HORNS AND
SORRY THIS'LL JUST TAKE A MINUTE
psst
MAGIC
WHO ASKED YOU?
Um WOULD YOU EXCUSE ME A MINUTE?
I'VE BEEN DYING TO GET OUT OF THIS YOU KNOW THIS OUTFIT I'D LIKE TO GO CHANGE
I SUSPECT YOU DON'T HAVE TO
SORRY? I'M NOT SURE WHAT YOU MEAN

FROM WHAT YOU'VE SAID, I SUSPECT YOUR ATTIRE IS ACTUALLY A MAGICAL CONSTRUCT. IT CAN, THEY BE MAGICALLY *DECONSTRUCTED*
THIS ALMOST CERTAINLY CONNECTS YOU TO SOME SORT OF POWER SOURCE. SOMETHING *UNLIKE* THE MAGIC COMMON TO DRESS
I'M FAIRLY CERTAIN YOU CAN SHED YOUR CLOTHING AT WILL
ARE *YOU* TRYING TO GET ME OUT OF MY CLOTHES?
NOTHING OF THE KIND
I'M SAYING THIS MARK ALLOWS YOU TO CHOOSE WHATEVER RAIMENT YOU LIKE. SIMPLY PUT YOUR MIND TO IT
YOU MEAN
JUST *THINK* ABOUT IT?
NO SPELLS
NO INCANTATIONS?

VERY NICELY DONE
AND A LOVELY CHOICE AS WELL
THANK YOU I LIKE IT TOO
TELL ME SOMETHING WHERE ARE YOU FROM?
NOT FROM AROUND HERE I'M A STRANGER, REALLY
G-FAN

BUT I AM FAMILIAR WITH POWER. YOU'RE SOMETHING VERY SPECIAL GISELLE. SOMETHING UNPRECEDENTED
I COULD TEACH YOU. HELP YOU LEARN TO CONTROL THIS POWER YOU'VE INHERITED
IF YOU WOULDN'T MIND HAVING ME UNDERFOOT
I
THINK I'D LIKE THAT
I DON'T BELIEVE I'VE EVER MET ANYONE LIKE YOU!
NO
I DON'T BELIEVE YOU HAVE
APPARENTLY
WE'RE ABOUT TO HAVE A VISITOR

HE...O, SISTER

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Brandon Peterson • Art Director • Pam Eklund • Production Manager
Kim Carr • Production Assistant • Dave Lanphear • Design Director

FIRST
"UNEARTHED"

HERE
I'M TRUSTING YOU

RMMMMMM
MM
MM
RMMMR!

GOOD SO FAR
YOU WERE RIGHT

IT WAS STILL THERE
I THOUGHT IT WAS ONLY A LEGEND
YET YOU KNEW WHERE IT WAS
YOU SURPRISE ME ENSON

KEEP DOING IT
UNDERSTAND, PERSHA, THAT THIS WAS AN INDULGENCE I TRUST MY EYES HAVE SHOWN YOU ALL YOU WISHED TO SEE?
AAAA!
HE KNEW I WAS THERE?

GENERATOR™

MILESTONES

by Gina Villa

We pick up our timeline after the summer convention season as we move our center of operations out of Mark's office at home and into our new digs in Oldsmar.

99

Part 2

September 1999 It's the day after Labor Day, but *our* work is just beginning. There are nine of us that day. Five -- Mark, Ian Feller, James Breitbeil, Laura Mittler and I -- have all been part of the "San Diego Eight," so we have a bond similar to what I imagine the survivors of the invasion of Normandy must have felt. Of the others, I have only briefly met Beth Widera and Pam Davies months before, and I am meeting Mike Beattie and John Smith for the first time. We walk into the building to find that nothing is there but walls, floors, some very large and shiny kitchen appliances, one honking big printer, a state-of-the-art computer room, and a bunch of phones that don't work yet. Then trucks start to arrive and begin to disgorge a daunting amount of stuff that has to be checked off, put away, and set up. This includes such things as furniture for the offices, computers, furniture for the kitchen, office supplies, furniture for the snack room, copy machines (both black and white and color), furniture for the conference room, artificial plants, furniture for the... Well, you get the idea. I find that I am in charge of supervising this process as well as doing a final inspection of the building and everything in it. I am ably assisted in all of this by Facilities Manager John Smith. One night we stay until after 9 P.M. putting tiny Post-It notes on every spot on the walls that needs to be repainted. By the time we are done we have gone through two packs of twelve pads times 100 sheets per pad. You do the math. The building looks like it has lost a fight with a confetti monster. And the painters don't like me very much, either.

"The building looks like it has lost a fight with a confetti monster. And the painters don't like me very much, either."

Then there are the submissions -- thousands and thousands of them. Mark has set a goal of responding to all of them by October. Everyone, except me, pitches in on the art submissions. Brandon has already winnowed out the "A" group, but the other 4,579 or so need to be sorted, filed and alphabetized. What am I doing while this is going on, you ask? Why, the exact same thing for the more than 400 writing submissions. Ian has first-read most of them and jotted a few notes on some, but I must now read them all in order to sort them more definitively. It feels like every time I get to the bottom of the pile more arrive in the mail. The job seems never-ending, but at last I send out my last letter. I keep aside a very short stack of the best for Barbara Kesel -- now officially the Head Writer of CrossGeneration Comics, Inc. -- to evaluate further. I am deeply satisfied that Barbara is joining us for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that she will now assume the responsibility of responding to submissions. (Yay!) Brandon arrives from California in the middle of the month and sets to work on the myriad number of tasks necessary to establish a functioning studio.

To be continued...

Lucifer #3
Blade of the Immortal

MYSTICISMS

Oh my God! This new comic of yours is a whole different universe. What you guys can do is amazing. To see all those images, with such beautiful colors and characters -- especially the ones from MYSTIC, which of course is my favorite. I loved your first two volumes. I want to let you guys know how much I am enjoying this new comic -- I love it! Goodbye X-Men and Thunderbolts. I also wanted to request something. Please introduce more appearances from the characters of the Houses, the ones floating in space, which have only appeared in CHRONICLES. Thank you for taking the time to read this. You can put my e-mail address in if you print my letter. Also, thank you for giving me another reason for dropping by the comic book store.

Elsa Reyna Gonzalez
Elsacne@hotmail.com
(Via e-mail)

Elsa,
It's our pleasure. I know that with the tremendous work that the MYSTIC team is putting in, you're going to continue to love this book. If more House members is what you want, more House members is what you'll get -- perhaps even in this issue! If you're still craving a bigger helping of these folks, be sure to put our fifth monthly title, THE FIRST (available in November), on your pull list. How's that for service?

Hi MYSTIC Staff
Just wanted to let you know I enjoyed reading the first two issues and I'm looking forward to the next ones. I like the plot and the artwork. MYSTIC is the first comic I have read from CrossGen and I am a big fan already. I have always liked to read about powerful, smart, and pretty heroines -- someone like Wonder Woman and Mystic. I also like that little squit with an attitude. Anyway, keep up the good work! If I could just make one suggestion, when the different guilds talk, can you draw a different color circle around the words or a different symbol for the different guild spirits -- so we know what guild is talking right away?

Thanks
Christine
(Via e-mail)

Always glad to welcome a new fan, Christine! Thanks for giving CrossGen a try. I think if you look closely at the balloons around the guild spirits' dialogue, you'll notice that the symbol of their guild is ghosted in the background. There's usually a legend of all the symbols on the inside front cover in "The Story So Far," and there is also one on our website. We tried making the balloons different colors the first time around, but it looked too much like a bunch of lollipops in the panel, so we changed the design.

Okay, first off I must say that MYSTIC is the first book by Ron Marz that I liked (sorry, Ron). This could have been because he wasn't writing characters I was interested in. But I went to pick up MYSTIC on my local comic dealer's recommendation and... WOW! Great stuff all around! I have heard the comparisons between Giselle and Sara Pezzini, but I think they are ludicrous. I was hooked on this book by the first page. It goes without saying that the art by Brandon Peterson and the inking by John Dell plus Crossley's coloring make this book beautiful. I think that if Mr. Peterson drew Aunt May he could make her look good! If I have one request it is that you tone down the scantily-clad women in this book, it hides the great writing and art. I also have to ask if you guys plan any crossovers with other companies. MYSTIC is a book that could blend well with many characters from many companies. Finally, I just have to say again "great job" to the whole MYSTIC team, and let's see this book go on forever.

Steve
Orlando, FL
(Via e-mail)

Well, Steve, since you're such a big fan of MYSTIC, Ron is willing to forgive you. He and the rest of the guys thank you for your kudos. I have to agree that I don't see much of a comparison between Giselle and Sara Pezzini either, but we can't complain about being favorably compared to a book as popular as Witchblade. To be completely honest, I'm a little surprised at your comment about the "scantily-clad" women. Giselle's dress at the party could be regarded as a little revealing, but remember that we were trying to establish her *bon vivant* personality in that scene. Her "costume" is a shredded version of the robes of the Nouveau Guild. As you can see from this issue, Giselle's clothes are a magical construct, so it's probably not a good idea to get too used to her current look. Lastly, if what you mean by a crossover is a story that is incomplete without making you buy another book...we aren't going to be doing those.

NEXT ISSUE:
The streets of the city play host to a magical battle between sisters as Giselle and Genevieve go to war. But is it really Genevieve, or is Giselle's opponent just another pawn of the Guild Masters?

Via e-mail, mail to:
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MYSTIC (In the subject line)

DOUBLE TROUBLE!
SIGI
#4 ON SALE SEPT 13TH
Scion
#4 ON SALE SEPT 20TH
MERIDIAN
#4 ON SALE SEPT 27TH
MYSTIC™
#5 OCTOBER 4th

NOVEMBER FIRST
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BONUS!
6-PAGE
PREQUEL
INSIDE!
THE FIRST
Barbara Kesel · Bart Sears · Andy Smith · Michael Atiyeh

MR.
X
Scanned by Mr_Xcitement

ARE YOU DOWN WITH..
YEAH, YOU KNOW ME!